

constituents have clearly stated that a ban on negotiating for lower prescription drug costs makes no sense. H.R. 4 is supported by community pharmacists, AARP, consumer rights' groups, and dozens of other organizations. Additionally, negotiating for lower prescription drug costs is not a new idea. States, corporations, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and large pharmacy chains all negotiate to receive price discounts on prescription drugs. In fact, HHS already has experience negotiating for lower prescription drug costs. In 2001, the agency successfully negotiated for lower prices for Cipro, the medication used in response to the anthrax attacks. It is time for HHS to use this expertise to benefit America's seniors and persons with disabilities.

Clearly, there is still much more work to be done to correct the many inadequacies of Medicare Part D, but H.R. 4 is an important first step, and one which will result in lower drug costs and real savings for millions of seniors and people with disabilities.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4.

HONORING MUHAMMAD ALI ON HIS 65TH BIRTHDAY

SPEECH OF

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish a very happy birthday to the former heavyweight champion of the world, and the undisputed greatest boxer of all time, Muhammad Ali.

Mr. Speaker, Muhammad Ali never shied away from speaking his mind on issues concerning racial inequality, social injustice and human rights issues, either while he was heavyweight champion, or today, as he continues to be a world leader on these issues.

Since retiring from boxing, Ali has raised over \$50 million for charities here in the U.S. and around the globe, and he has delivered millions in food and medical supplies to countries throughout Africa and Asia.

He has been on international aid missions to Cuba, and he played a key role in getting American hostages released from Iraq before the start of the Persian Gulf war.

Muhammad Ali's penchant for peacemaking was recognized by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 1998 when Ali was named a U.N. Messenger of Peace.

While serving at the U.N., he also worked to build the Muhammad Ali Center in his hometown of Louisville, KY, to promote respect, hope and understanding among all people, and which strives to help all individuals realize the greatness within them.

Standing on principle and never casting aspersions on those who challenged his moral convictions, Ali objected to the war in Vietnam, and refused to be inducted into the U.S. Army in 1967.

As a consequence, Ali was indicted for draft evasion, convicted, and was stripped of his boxing title. Eventually Ali was ultimately vindicated in the United States Supreme Court, which overturned his conviction, by a unanimous vote in 1971, but not before losing valuable years of his livelihood and being wrongly

accused of being unpatriotic and disloyal to the country he loved so dearly.

Muhammad Ali would regain his boxing title in 1974, but far more important was the manner in which he wore the mantle of champion.

Mr. Speaker, Muhammad Ali is not only one of the greatest athletes of our time, he has become one of the most recognized and beloved people in the world, and he insists on using his celebrity to help his fellow man and woman.

His athletic prowess made him famous, but it is his heart and good deeds that will have cemented his place in our hearts forever.

Muhammad Ali is a hero in every sense of the world, and we all owe him a debt of gratitude for his role in making America a more conscientious and better country.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act. This legislation corrects a grave mistake of the past by striking a provision in the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 which prohibited the Secretary of Health and Human Services from directly negotiating with pharmaceutical companies. In addition, H.R. 4 explicitly requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to directly negotiate with the pharmaceutical industry for lower prescription drug prices.

This legislation is necessary because Medicare drug plans have failed to obtain significant price discounts for seniors. In fact, the drug plans' prices are over 60 percent higher than prices for identical drugs in Canada. Requiring the Secretary to negotiate with the drug companies will bring much needed relief to millions of Medicare beneficiaries.

More than 90 percent of Americans agree that the Secretary should be directly negotiating with the pharmaceutical industry.

Unfortunately, the current Secretary has said he does not support the underlying legislation. His predecessor, though, has demonstrated the authority for and efficacy of the HHS Secretary negotiating with the pharmaceutical industry for lower prices. In 2001, former HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson successfully negotiated a reduced price for Cipro. In fact, the Secretary negotiated the price down from \$4.67 to \$1.77 per dose—a reduction of nearly 500 percent. Additionally, when Secretary Thompson resigned his position at HHS, he explicitly stated he wished Congress had given him the power to negotiate with drug manufacturers to secure lower prices for Medicare beneficiaries.

The Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act will save seniors money both at the pharmacy counter and in the form of lower premiums.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that helping seniors obtain prescription drugs at prices they can afford is part of the Democratic 100 hours plan. I thank the gentlemen from California and Michigan, and the gentlewoman from Missouri for their leadership on this issue, and I

urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF "BLACK JANUARY" IN AZERBAIJAN

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, on January 20th, the people of Azerbaijan, both at home and abroad, will commemorate the 16th anniversary of what has become known as Black January. The terrible event remembered by this commemoration was an atrocity—but it also gave birth to a hope that led eventually to independence and freedom.

At around midnight, on the night of January 19–20, 1990, Azerbaijan was invaded by 26,000 Soviet troops pursuant to a state of emergency that had been declared in secret by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow. Dozens of people would be dead in the streets of Baku, Azerbaijan's capital, before the Soviet authorities in Moscow even deigned to acknowledge that a decision had been made to suppress the pro-independence and pro-democracy movement in Azerbaijan.

A courageous resistance by Azerbaijanis to the Soviet invasion continued into February. Eventually, 140 Azerbaijanis were killed, about 700 more were wounded, and still hundreds more were rounded up and detained indefinitely.

The Soviet attack against innocent civilians in Azerbaijan followed massacres in other constituent republics in the then-Soviet Union, including Kazakhstan in 1986 and Georgia in 1989. Tragically, the Azerbaijani experience would be replicated in large part 1 year later in Lithuania.

In a report issued shortly after the tragedy of Black January, Human Rights Watch put the onrush of events into a larger perspective: "... the violence used by the Soviet Army on the night of January 19–20 was so out of proportion to the resistance offered by Azerbaijanis as to constitute an exercise in collective punishment. The punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in the other Republics of the Soviet Union."

But brute force was not enough to hold the Soviet Union together.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the night of January 19–20, 1990 gave birth to Azerbaijan's independence. It was on that night that Azerbaijanis lost their fear of the Soviet Union. It was on that night that Azerbaijanis realized their dream of independence and freedom could not, and would not, be denied.

On August 30, 1991, in the wake of the attempted coup in the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan declared its independence—one of the first constituent republics to do so. And the last troops from the former Soviet Union were finally removed from Azerbaijani soil in 1993.

Every January 20, as many thousands gather in Martyr's Cemetery in the hills above Baku, the dead are honored and the nation's commitment to independence, democracy, and freedom is renewed. The victims of Black January did not die in vain.

HONORING TOM TEMIN

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Tom Temin for over 17 years of service providing the Federal technology community with unbiased, accurate, and timely information.

Through Mr. Temin's role as executive vice president and editor in chief of Government Computer News, Washington Technology, Defense Systems, Government Leader and other technology publications, he has brought valuable insight and creative journalism to the Federal IT arena.

Under Tom's guidance Government Computer News has become a premier IT magazine providing objective and comprehensive rankings of the usefulness and overall value of technology as it reaches the market. Leaders in the executive branch, both Houses of Congress and the broader technology community have come to consider the editorials he has written for Government Computer News as shrewd and perceptive analysis of the implications of IT trends.

The newspaper's fair and unyielding pursuit of issues showing the flaws and faults in the Federal technology sector has prompted numerous reforms that continue to conserve funds and improve performance for the American taxpayers.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to commend and congratulate Mr. Tom Temin on all of his accomplishments. His tireless efforts have deeply impacted the public discussion of IT issues in the Federal Government, truly meriting recognition. I call upon my colleagues to join me in applauding Tom for his past accomplishments and in wishing him continued success in the years to come.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG NEGOTIATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this critical legislation.

The Part D prescription drug plan has caused mass confusion and, unfortunately, provided more in profits to drug companies than savings to seniors.

Private corporations, large pharmacy chains, and individual states all use their bargaining power to secure lower drug prices for the patients they represent. It simply makes no sense that the Department of Health and Human Services is prohibited from negotiating on behalf of millions more seniors.

In fact, a recent study by Families USA found that Medicare beneficiaries pay an average of 58 percent more for the same prescription drugs sold to patients who receive their drugs from the Veterans Department, which can negotiate cheaper prices.

Using the bargaining power of 42 million Medicare enrollees to secure the best drug prices for our seniors could save billions, according to some estimates.

These savings could then be used to begin to close the infamous "doughnut hole" or gaps in coverage that millions of seniors experienced last year and are expected to experience again in 2007.

Allowing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate prices won't solve all of the problems associated with the drug benefit but it will set us on the right course toward providing our seniors with the comprehensive, affordable drug coverage they deserve.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important bill.

A TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE EDD NYE

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mr. MCINTYRE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor North Carolina Representative Edd Nye and to thank him for more than 30 years of loyal public service to the people of Southeastern North Carolina. Representative Nye began his career in public service by joining the United States Air Force and launched his political career in 1966 as a Bladen County Commissioner. Mr. Nye served one term in the North Carolina State Senate before moving on to the N.C. House of Representatives, where he would go on to serve as a Representative for 30 years. As a loyal and dedicated North Carolina lawmaker, Representative Nye received "Legislator of the Year" awards from numerous advocacy groups, including the Autism Society, the Easter Seals, the Health Directors' Association, and the Mental Health Association. Such distinguished commitment and work are true signs of his dedication to his constituents. Indeed, Representative Nye is a role model for us all.

In addition to his political service, Mr. Nye is also an active member of his community in Bladen County. He has taught Sunday School and served as a deacon at the Elizabethtown Baptist Church. He is a past moderator of the Bladen Baptist Association, a former trustee of both Bladen Community College and Southeastern Mental Health, and an active member of the Bladen Masonic Lodge. Madam Speaker, I commend Edd Nye for his leadership, longevity, and love for the people of Bladen County and North Carolina. He has performed his civic duty with grace, and he has been ever mindful of the people he represents. May God's strength, joy, and peace be with him always.

COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5, the College Student Relief Act. The rising cost of education is a concern for students and parents across the country. Occasionally, I hold office hours at grocery stores in my district back in Chicago.

Every time people attend to share their concerns my constituents let me know that they are worried about the cost of higher education.

They worry about being able to send their children to college without taking out a new mortgage on their homes or working a second job. They worry about dipping into their retirement savings in order to pay the exorbitant cost of tuition. And they are not only worried, but they are also shocked by the tuition increases from year to year for their children who are already in college.

It is our responsibility to make sure that the price of a college education does not close doors for the future leaders of America. Today we will correct a grave mistake of the past and pass the College Student Relief Act—ensuring those doors never close.

This legislation is long overdue. The last Congress neglected to deal with college affordability—allowing the cost to skyrocket and leaving millions behind in their desire for a higher education. Tuition and fees at public universities have increased by 41 percent since 2001, and interest rates on student loans have risen to record-breaking highs. The maximum Pell grant was frozen in the President's budget for a fourth year in a row. Today, the maximum Pell grant covers only 41 percent of the cost of attending college—about half of what it covered three decades ago.

In my home state of Illinois, the average graduate from a state university leaves with more than \$15,000 in debt. This massive debt limits the choices that graduates can make, and discourages many students from seeking a college education at all.

The College Student Relief Act takes the first step toward correcting this great injustice, providing real relief to students and middle class families by making a college education more affordable and accessible.

A college education should be as universal in the 21st century as a high school education was in the 20th century. This legislation is the first step towards accomplishing that goal.

Madam Speaker, I am proud that helping students with their college loans is part of the Democratic 100 hours plan. I thank the gentleman from California for his leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 5, the College Student Relief Act.

PEACE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently announced that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas would meet with her to discuss how peace can finally be brought to the Middle East. I am pleased to hear of this three-way meeting and believe a meaningful resolution is long overdue.

Since the year 2000, Israel has demonstrated a willingness to act unilaterally in the name of peace; only to have their enemies respond with more acts of violence. In 2000, Israel withdrew its forces from southern Lebanon, only to be followed by Hezbollah and its missiles. In 2005, Israel unilaterally withdrew